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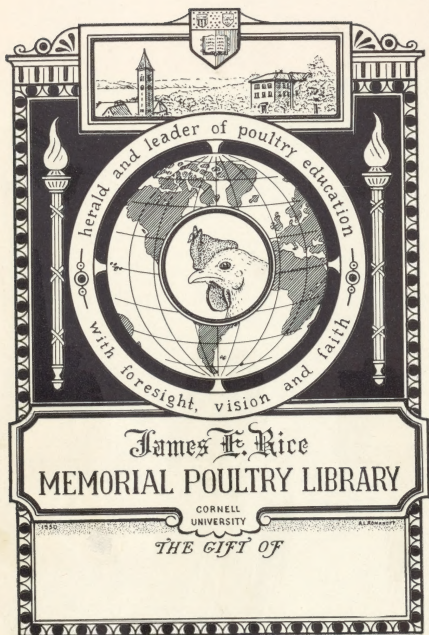
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The . . .

Rosecomb
Bantam.



R. FLETCHER HEARNshaw.



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THE
ROSECOMB
BANTAM

BY 78

ROGER FLETCHER HEARNshaw, F.Z.S.

AUTHOR OF "THE SCOTCH GREY BANTAM."

ILLUSTRATED BY LUDLOW.

SECOND EDITION.

Nottingham :

R. FLETCHER HEARNshaw, FOX HILL, BURTON JOYCE.

1905.

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THE
ROSECOMB
DEDICATED

BANTAM
TO

THE REV. R. G. SOANS, B.A. (OXON.),

VICAR OF EAST HARDWICK,

MEMBER OF THE SOCIETY OF AUTHORS,

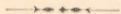
AS A TOKEN OF SINCERE ESTEEM, AND IN

RECOGNITION OF GENIAL AND CONSTANT FRIENDSHIP

DURING MANY YEARS, KNOWING HIS GREAT

AFFECTION FOR BANTAMS.

PREFACE TO SECOND EDITION.



The great demand for the first edition of this book was a source of pleasure to me, and the original copies were rapidly sold, therefore I have been encouraged by that success to produce a second edition.

It is still the only book devoted solely to Rosecomb Bantams, and it is my object to treat with both the Blacks and Whites, but more especially the former as they are more popular.

The price is not large, thus bringing the book within the reach of the most humble breeder.

R. FLETCHER HEARNshaw.

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Mr. R. Fletcher Hearnshaw's Black Rosecomb Bantams :

THE ROSECOMB BANTAM.

CHAPTER I.

The Black Rosecomb.

ALTHOUGH this breed has been before the public for over fifty years it still maintains its popularity. Why? Well chiefly on account of its beauty, for nothing is more beautiful than a black Rosecomb in the pink of condition at about eight months old, and no breed has made greater strides during the last twenty years, therefore it is not much good showing a black now without it very nearly approaches the standard of perfection given later on in this book.

In a variety class a black always has a good pull, and if a good specimen, will generally be placed in the money, although at nearly every show now, you find separate classes for Rosecombs, and they generally fill well.

The lobes in the blacks in past years were much improved by crossing them with whites, a practice which was all right at the time, but I would not advise any one to try it at the present time, in fact it is not needed, but at that time a certain amount of red was found in the lobes of the black, and in this way it was got rid of it.

Of course, a black Rosecomb Bantam is a miniature black Hamburg, and present day judges often overlook size for feather. It is advisable to make a practice of weighing all exhibition birds and never show a cockerel over twenty ounces, not even if he has any amount of feather.

There is always a demand for really good blacks, therefore it is well to impress upon you the importance of breeding the very best ; moderate stock is no good to the breeder, and it does his customers no good when they buy it. It is the ambition of every genuine breeder to establish a strain of his own, and there are two ways of doing this, first to go to a well known breeder of Rosecombs and ask him to mate you a trio, (*i.e.*, a cock and two hens) at a price at which you are prepared to buy the same, and don't be frightened at paying a good price to begin with ; you will never regret it if you go to an honest, straightforward breeder.

What is a reasonable price for a first-class trio ? To this question, I reply :—"From ten to twenty pounds or more for really first-class birds."

Then there are men who have not the money to launch out in this way at the start ; to them my second theory applies.

Again, go to a genuine breeder and buy a dozen eggs in April, May, or June, and hatch them. I say a genuine breeder, because many men who exhibit Bantams at the present day do not breed the birds they win with.

The greatest mistake, and one that is often made by novices, is to buy a cock simply because he won a prize at such a show. Then they go to another show and buy a hen, and so on. The secret is to stick to one strain and breed in, then you cannot get wrong.

A few black Rosecombs may be kept in a very small space, and I have seen them kept in back yards and small gardens in the suburbs of London and other cities with marked success.

Here they have a distinct advantage over the whites, because it is not absolutely necessary to wash a black for show (although they may be improved by doing so some-

times), but under these conditions it is certainly necessary to wash a white either for showing or to send away to a customer. You will notice the word "Customer." I make use of it here because I assume that every breeder of bantams must make use of his surplus stock, therefore he must have customers. Now, in breeding blacks it all depends upon the space at your disposal how many pens you may mate.

I strongly advise two if space will permit, although it is quite possible to breed good pullets and cockerels from the same pen, yet it is highly improbable; one pen should be mated to breed cockerels and another to breed pullets, but directions for this will be found under the head of Mating, Chapter IV.

It is no credit to anyone to win with bought birds, so surely it is the ambition of every fancier to breed his own winners and come to the front in a sportsmanlike manner.

Now, just a few remarks with regard to food for adult blacks; never overfeed, and see that all food is eaten up; feed the birds at regular times, always twice daily and no more; adult stock birds should be fed about nine in the morning, and the second meal at four in the afternoon. Of course, the second meal may be given later with advantage in the summer. Let one person feed the same birds, and only one, and moreover be methodical in feeding, some breeders feed their birds three times per day; but it is not advisable.

With regard to quality of food, soft food is the best for the first meal in the day, and hard corn for the second. There is nothing to equal one of the well-known biscuit meals mixed with hot water, as a soft food; they are rather expensive, but there is no other food equal to them. I generally give grain only during June, July, and August.

The best grain is good sound wheat for stock birds, and always feed on this for the second meal. Some breeders prefer a mixture composed of one-third of the following — canary seed, dari, and wheat. To this I have no objection to raise, and it is an admirable mixture in many cases, not being quite so feeding as wheat alone.

Leg colour is often difficult to retain in blacks, especially if the birds are kept in confined runs on dry ground. An excellent plan is to wash the legs once a week, and, after drying, smear a little oil or vaseline over them at the same time; then you are preventing scaly legs and retaining your black leg colour.

Of course, these precautions are not so necessary if the birds have a good grass run, moisture is nature's natural retainer of leg colour, and there is nothing to equal it.

Again, scaly legs are a great source of trouble, if neglected in the first instance, but the following ointment has never been known to fail, and you make it up as follows :—

Flowers of Sulphur, one ounce.

Carbonate of Potassium, half-an-ounce.

Vaseline, four ounces.

Apply the ointment every other day after washing the legs.

I am not devoting any space to diseases, but may mention here that scaly legs are produced by the action of a small parasite known as *Sarcoptes Mutans*; this parasite lives on bantams' legs, and causes the leg scabies, often causing much discomfort and pain.



CHAPTER II.

The White Rosecomb.

HITES have had a downward tendency during the last ten years, but at the present time I am pleased to find they are once more reviving. More breeders are taking them up; they are becoming more popular, making better prices, and in fact are on the forward march leading to a bright future. As regards origin they can date back even as far as the blacks.

Now, in whites you can breed both cockerels and pullets from the same pen with gratifying results; but still there are advocates for two separate pens—one for cockerels and the other for pullets.

Lobes and short feather are the weakest points in whites at the present time; to remedy this, some breeders contend that a black cockerel with big lobes and an abundance of feather should be mated with the white hens, the theory of which is exceedingly good; but I have not found it answer so well in practice. First, your progeny will have blue legs; again, by thus crossing you materially increase the size of the offspring. Of course, the majority of the progeny will turn out white, though you may get some blacks cuckoos, or greys, all of which may be killed, and thus save further trouble. I have tried this crossing once during my career as a breeder, but do not intend to attempt it again; other people may do so as an experiment if they like, but I cannot recommend the practice. Certainly, the lobes are improved and the feather also both in length and quality

but while you are doing this you are loosing other valuable points, and it will take you years to breed them out and get your birds true once more.

Leg colour of course is more easily retained in whites, in fact it often improves with age, while on the other hand the colour in black legs always deteriorates with age.

In constitution whites are decidedly weaker, of course, the constant washing accounts for this, as you cannot show one without washing.

Then another point that leads to weakness, is the constant shade required, thus lack of sunshine, without which animal life can never thrive. It is imperative that exhibition whites must be shaded from the sun, either by canvass or the run built under trees which afford shade from the scorching rays of the mid-day sun. The effect of the sun upon white bantams is well-known to every breeder by its rays, the feathers become tanned and have that well-known yellow tinge that is so much despised in the show pen; we find the cockerels are much more susceptible to this yellow tinge than the pullets, of course, it is not always caused by the sun; sometimes it is a symptom of a diseased liver; they are also very subject to Roup, which complaint is generally the result of a neglected cold; it is highly infectious, and often proves fatal. Whites are certainly suffering from being bred in too closely, as the really good strains at present are not in the hands of more than twenty breeders. Last winter I saw some splendid whites shown in London and elsewhere, one cockerel especially was the admiration of all, his lobes and feather being a great improvement upon anything I have seen for a very long time.

Whites are not so suitable for fanciers to keep in smoky towns as blacks, but what is more pretty than to see a good breeding pen of whites walking across your lawn in the

country. As a rule, whites are greater favourites with ladies this is on account of their gentle habits and tameness ; they soon learn to feed out of your hand, which quality makes them very attractive to children, so that they are often kept as pets without having any pretention to show points. But my motto has always been to breed the best ; they pay the best and cost no more to keep, only a little further outlay at the beginning.

Naturally, at the present time a first-class breeding pen of whites would not cost so much as one the same quality of blacks.

Whites are good layers, and often go broody. They can cover very few eggs, but if allowed to sit they make very good fierce mothers, defending their family to the best of their ability. But don't let Rosecombs sit, Silkie-Pekins are much better, and they cover more eggs. Classes are usually provided for whites at our best shows such as the Palace, Dairy, Birmingham, and International, but they are never very large, although the quality is good. What is wanted now is more recruits in the white Rosecomb Fancy, thus increase the number of breeders, and in time swell the entries at our shows ; then more liberal classification will be given for them. It is much more difficult to breed one good white than to breed five good blacks. First, their constitutions are so weak that you lose a good many through death from disease, and secondly, the chickens are much more delicate and difficult to rear than black Rosecombs.

If your birds are in confined runs never forget to give them grit, it is most important for white pullets in the summer time, as if they are not provided with it you will get many eggs laid without shells, especially if they are kept up and get into a weak condition, so that you must do everything you can to keep them healthy and free from disease.

If fed in moderation and managed properly the size will be all right, but do not let them get too large.

Fresh water is another very important item, let it be renewed every morning without fail as Amoeba and other micro-organisms accumulate in stagnant water; and thus convey disease from one bantam to another; you cannot afford to neglect a single point that is beneficial to good health if you wish to be a successful breeder of white Rosecomb Bantams. The healthier your stock birds are remember the stronger the germs will be in the egg, therefore your chickens will be more lively, cheerful, and healthy, and will grow up into fierce little cockerels or pullets as the case may be, and will be a pleasure to look upon, not white, pale-faced little creature like some breeders produce. Health should be your first consideration and your guide as to breeding in, but stick to one strain and breed in this is the secret of success.



CHAPTER III.

STANDARD OF PERFECTION.

Black Rosecomb Cockerel.

Comb.

Neat, long, square, and well-filled in the front, and set firmly on the head, tapering off in width to the setting on of the leader. Top: Perfectly level and full of work, *i.e.*, crowded with little fine spikes. Leader: Set on with a stout base, firm, long, perfectly straight, and tapering to a point. The rising slightly from the front to the back, the leader rising also, and at the same angle as the comb.

Beak.

Rather short, stout at the base, and black.

Head.

Broad and short. Face: Brilliant cherry red, and fine texture. Wattles: Same shade as comb and face, round, neat, and of fine texture. Eyes: Hazel or brown.

Lobes.

Absolutely round, having nicely rounded edges, thick and of uniform thickness all over, set firmly on the face, perfectly smooth, of kid-like texture, and spotlessly white, especially near the wattles, proportioned in size to the bird, but not smaller than a sixpence or larger than a shilling.

Neck.

Rather short and covered with wide hackle feathers, and having a well-defined curve at the back, the hackle falling gracefully and plentifully over the shoulders and wing-bows, and reaching out nearly to the tail.

Shoulders.

Broad and flat.

Chest.

Broad and carried well forward and upward, showing a bold curve from wing-bow to wing-bow.

Back.

Short, broad, and flat.

Stern.

Flat, broad, and thick, *i.e.*, not running off to nothing at the setting on of the tail, and covered with a profusion of long saddle feathers, hanging down on either side like a fringe, and extending from the tail to the middle of the back.

Tail.

Carried well back, consisting of broad feathers, overlapping one another neatly ; sound black in colour (a point of rare quality would of such feathers bearing a strong green sheen). Sickles : Long, broad from base to end, well circled round with a bold sweep (the inner tail feathers not protruding beyond the sickles).

Furnishing Feathers : Broad from base to end and uniformly circled with the sickles, tips level, and hanging somewhat shorter than the sickles.

Side Hangers : Broad and long, extra bright green in colour, and together with the saddle hackles, hanging down gracefully and filling the space between the stern and wing-ends.

Wings.

Flight-feathers sound black, and wide (each feather rounding off with a broad end, not too long, but in keeping with the birds cobbiness) carried rather low, showing the front half of the thighs only, with a clearly defined wing-bar of broad feathers, extra bright green colour.

Legs.

Thighs : Set well apart, short, stout at setting on, tapering the hocks, and covered with round black feathers. Shanks : Sound black, rather short, round small, and of fine texture. Toes : Sound black to ends, and furnished with white toe nails.

Colour.

As bright green in sheen as possible all over, from the throat to the sickle ends.

Weight.

Not to exceed twenty ounces.

General Appearances.

Thick set or cobby (without being dumpy and coarse).

Serious Faults.

Stiltiness, narrow chest, narrow back, hollow fronted comb, coarse bone, light legs, tight-up wings, purple sheen purple barring—which should almost amount to disqualification—brown or grizzle flights, colored feathers, “narrow feathered,” “short feathered,” white in face, blushed lobe.

Disqualifications.

Cut comb, skin or mutilated face ; altered, removed, or added feather ; artificial colouring on any part of the bird.

STANDARD OF PERFECTION.

Black Rosecomb Pullet.**Comb.**

Neat, long, square, and well filled in the front and set firmly on the head, tapering off in width to the work, *i.e.*, crowded with a little round spikes.

Leader : Set on with a stout base, firm, long, perfectly straight, and tapering to a point. The comb rising slightly from the front to the back, the leader rising also, and at the same angle as the comb.

Beak.

Rather short, stout at the base and black.

Head.

Broad and short. Face : Brilliant cherry red, and of fine texture. Wattles : Same shade as the comb and face, round, neat, and of fine texture. Eyes : Hazel or brown.

Lobes.

Absolutely round, having nicely rounded edges, thick, and of uniform thickness all over, set firmly on the face, perfectly smooth, of kid-like texture and spotlessly white in colour, especially near the wattles, proportioned in size to the bird, but not larger than a threepenny piece.

Neck.

Rather short, and covered with hackle feathers of nice length, and having a well defined curve at the back.

Shoulders.

Broad and flat.

Chest.

Broad and carried well forward and upwards, showing a bold curve from wing-bow to wing-bow.

Back.

Short, broad, and flat.

Stern.

Flat, broad and thick, *i.e.*, not running off to nothing at the setting on of the tail, and having an abundance of saddle feathers of sound green colour.

Tail.

Carried well back, consisting of broad feathers, overlapping one another neatly, sound black in colour (a point of rare quality would be such feathers bearing a strong green sheen.)

Wings

Flight feathers of sound black, and wide (each feather rounding off with a broad end—not too long but in keeping with the bird's cobbiness), carried rather higher than the cockerel's, but not by any means tight up to the body, and having a clearly defined wing-bar of broad feathers extra bright green in colour.

Legs.

Thighs set well apart, short, stout at setting on, tapering to the hocks, and covered with sound black feathers. Shanks : Sound black, rather short, and round, small and of fine texture. Toes : Sound black to ends and furnished with white toe nails.

Colour.

As bright green in sheen as possible all over, from the throat to the tips of the tail.

Weight.

Not exceeding sixteen ounces.

General Appearance.

Thick set or cobby without being dumpy or coarse.

Serious Faults.

Stiltiness, narrow chest, narrow back, hollow fronted comb, coarse bone, light legs, tight up wings, purple sheen, purple barring—which should almost amount to disqualification—brown or grizzle flights, colored feathers, “narrow feathered,” “white in face, blushed lobe.”

Disqualification.

Cut comb, skinned or mutilated face; altered, removed, or added feather, artificial coloring of any part of the bird.

In the standard I give below for White Rosecombs, I shall only name the points in which they differ from the Blacks, so that for the other points I must refer you back again to the Standard of Perfection for Black Rosecombs.

White Rosecomb Cockerel.**Beak.**

Rather short, stout at the base, and perfectly white.

Tail and Wings.

Same as the black Rosecomb, only the feathers must be spotlessly white.

Legs.

Set well apart, clear white, round, short, and composed of fine bone, the toes being white with white toe nails.

Colour.

Spotlessly white all over from the neck to the end of the tail.

Serious Faults.

Blue or dark legs, coarse bone, wings carried high, black feathers, yellow tinge on feathers, white in the face or blushed lobes.

Disqualification.

See Standard for black Rosecomb cock.

White Rosecomb Pullet.

Beak.

Short and stout, perfectly white.

Tail and Wings

The same as the black Rosecomb, only the feathers must be spotlessly white.

Legs.

Set well apart, clear white, round, short and composed of fine bone, the toes being white, with white toe-nails.

Colour.

Spotlessly white all over from neck to the end of the tail.

Serious Faults.

Blue or dark legs, coarse bone, wings carried high, black feathers, yellow tinge on feathers, white in the face or blushed lobe.

Disqualification.

See Standard for black Rosecomb hen.

Standards are very good for the novice and also as a guide to the breeder and the exhibitor ; but please don't run away with the idea that every judge of Rosecombs carries a standard in his pocket to refer to as occasion requires.

A good judge can see if a bird is up to or nearly approaching the Standard of Perfection at a glance ; of course, the two standards in this book are perfection, they are points to be aimed at in breeding ; but don't think you will breed a bird corresponding in every point to the standard ; certainly not, for every bird has a weak point somewhere and the trained eye never observes two birds alike, if a good judge has seen a bird once and examined it, he will know that bird again anywhere if it is in a class of twenty or more entries.

There are men who breed Rosecombs for years, and yet do not know a good one when they see it ; again, another man after two or three years' experience knows one in a minute.

How is this ? Because judging is a natural gift, which by constant practice can be brought to perfection.

Many present day judges have sacrificed feather (especially in blacks) for size, which is a mistake ; as the beauty of these miniature little creatures disappears if they get large and coarse. Feather may be produced at any time at the expense of size, but I am not advocate for the very small birds, for it is possible to breed pullets eleven ounces and even less by late hatching and lack of food, but the constitution of these birds is done for, they have neither the brilliancy nor beauty of feather, and more often than not their reproductive organs suffer for life, and they ultimately die egg bound. Indeed, this is a sad end for any bird to come to, and a most painful one, as any witness will testify who has seen the agonies through which a bantam goes



Major Fred Crowther's White Rosecomb Bantams :

Hen—First, Dairy ; First and Special, Liverpool ; First, Kendal.

Cock—Second, Dairy ; Third, Kendal.



when suffering from this frequent and often fatal disease. Again, very small cockerels never get the same width and length of tail feather. What I mean is, that a cockerel eight months old weighing fourteen ounces would not have either the width, length, or quality of tail feather and side hangers that one would find in another cockerel the same age weighing nineteen ounces. Therefore, with reference to size *versus* feather, you must aim at the happy medium, and get neither too much nor too little of either. Let your eye be a guide as well as your scales, and you will come out all right in the end.

But there are many points to confuse a beginner, and the only way to overcome the same is to stick to breeding, and to get plenty of practical experience, see all you can, hear all you can, and find out all you can by reading, and then what appeared to be mountains when you embarked in the bantam fancy will gradually fall beneath your eyes, and you will go on and prosper, and perhaps some day, but not until many years of perseverance, you will find that coveted honour of First and Special on your show pen at one of our best shows.

Don't be discouraged because you get nothing the first time you show. You may get a card next time, and so get higher and higher.

As you get a better judge of your stock you will not send a bird to show without it very nearly approaches your Standard of Perfection. Then, of course, if it does not get a prize you blame the judge.

Do not pull the judges to pieces, it is bad form. If you are not pleased with one try another and say nothing about it.

Men who can't win always blame the judges, when generally it is the poor quality of the stock they show that is to blame.

CHAPTER IV.

Mating.

MATING bantams is just the same in two ways to mating any other variety of prize animals or birds, first, because to a great measure the future success of your strain, if you are a breeder, depends almost entirely upon the judicious mating of your stock birds; and secondly, it should always be your object to correct any defect found in the male by mating him to a female perfect in that defect, or *vice versa*. Take for example a cock that is good in all points, only he is leggy. Now to remedy this defect I should mate him to hens extra short in leg, even if this is done at the expense of some other minor points.

A strain is established by the survival of the fittest in all breeds, birds or animals, and when mating your stock you must have a sharp eye and be able to see valuable points at a glance and to know exactly what type you want to breed. Many specimens are no use whatever in the exhibition pen, but on the other hand they are the very best to breed from. Never breed from a bantam without a pedigree; pedigrees are just as important in Rosecombs as in any other prize stock.

Never breed from a bird because he won First and Special at a certain show and you took a fancy to him and bought him, but on the other hand you didn't know how he was bred or who bred him. Much better use a bird not a winner and know his pedigree for several generations.

In mating blacks it is advisable to have two pens, one for breeding cockerels and the other for breeding pullets.

Before going on it will be well to define what is the meaning of cockerel pen ; we do not mean that only one sex is produced from each pen ; certainly not ! But we mean this, that better cockerels can be bred from a combination set apart for their benefit, and on the other hand better pullets can be produced in the same manner, but both pens produce offspring of both sexes.

I will now describe how to mate a pen to produce a first-class black cockerels ; take a male bird (preferably one that had not been shown, as they are more fertile) free from red or straw colored feathers, sound black legs, good head points especially his lobes, and, of course as perfect in other points as you can get them. To this bird mate three of the deadeest black pullets or hens you can get, avoiding the more lustrous hens or pullets as the case may be.

It is better to have one year's difference in age between the sexes for breeding, say a cockerel twelve months old, to be mated with hens two years old, and on the contrary pullets twelve months old to be mated to a cock two years old.

I will next describe how to mate up a pen to breed first-class exhibition black pullets. For this purpose select a small cobby cock, extra short in back, short in leg, and very rich in colour, showing good sheen on his breast and wings. To him mate three pullets of the most brilliant colour, sound black, but with a real good green sheen all over the body. Of course, this colour must not be taken into consideration at the expense of other points ; they must possess short backs and be of good shape with good legs and head points.

Remember leg colour when mating, get birds with sound black legs, not the horrid slate coloured legs that are often seen at the present day ; but remember leg colour always

wears with age. For example, a pullet that has grand legs may at two years old have very light legs. Don't forget size when mating, it is a most important point. Try to get your pullets between fourteen and sixteen ounces, and your cockerels between eighteen and twenty ounces, and always weigh your stock birds when mating your breeding pens, you will not regret doing so; keep to one strain of Rose-combs and breed in; breed in to keep the size all right, but don't breed in too closely; let the stamina of your birds be a guide as to how close to breed in.

There are many obstacles that fall in the way of small and especially inexperienced breeders, but try again and success will come at last, and nothing succeeds like success. If you cannot rely upon your own judgment in mating get a friend to help you or pay a man to mate your breeding pens for you, never be discouraged simply because you do not breed a winner the first year; go on again and you will do better as you get more experience. I never found any material advantage in using two pens for breeding whites; upon many occasions I have bred winning white cockerels and pullets both from the same pen; but a few remarks on the selection of whites will not be out of place here. Be careful to select your stock birds pure white, not sappy with a yellow tinge, which is often a sign of weakness, get the cock robust and lively but not large; eggs from whites are often very unfertile, and it must be your aim to guard against this; you often get eggs with very thin shells from whites, hence the necessity for an abundant supply of grit in all your breeding pens, and don't forget green food if your breeding pens are not on the grass.

Now, to come back to mating whites, see that you get pure white legs in both sexes, not mottled or inclined to a blue tinge, get plenty of feather, especially in the tail of the

cock ; lobes and feather are the two weak points in whites to-day, especially lobes, which are generally small, bad shape, and poor colour ; but if you mate a black cock with good lobes and plenty of tail feather with white hens, the majority of the offspring from these birds will come self coloured and the lobes and tails of the whites may be improved but at the expense of other valuable points, therefore I cannot recommend this practice of crossing the two colours for many reasons, and I am not speaking without experience, as I have tried it myself ; it is much better to mate up each colour separately, and by judicious mating and patience you get the points corrected where you are weak in time. In breeding Rosecombs patience is an invaluable quality in a man as there are many obstacles to get over, many disappointments—for example, birds dying, unfertile eggs, chickens ill, and many other minor difficulties which must be overcome.

Many people have an idea that if they go to a show and buy the winning Rosecomb cock and then two winning pullets at the two different shows and mate these birds together, that they will produce first-class exhibition chickens from them ; but this is not the case. You will ask, Why ? Well, for several reasons. First, you have three different birds of perhaps inferior strains ; they all three may be deficient in one important point, which might be transferred to the offspring ; again, the pedigrees and probably the breeders of this trio are entirely unknown to you. ‘

So with this example you will see the folly of mating birds up in an unscientific manner ; therefore, keep to one strain and know the pedigree of the birds you breed from.

The novice will say these are three minor points, when he reads this chapter before mating his breeding pens, but if he does not take notice of them he will regret it in the future

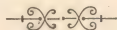
when his chickens grow up. Then he will say to himself, "How foolish it was of me not to be more careful about mating up my stock birds, if I had been, what a different lot of chickens I should have produced; as it is I have wasted a year and not bred a winner, but will do better in future."

Now this is an example of how many a beginner has looked back upon his mating and the offspring that he has produced during his first year at breeding.

You cannot afford to lose twelve months, as it means loss of money and loss of time, both of which are of vital importance if you are breeding bantams either for pleasure or profit. There is no doubt that there is much pleasure to be derived from keeping bantams, and also there is a profit to be made by keeping exhibition bantams if properly managed.

A practical lesson in mating may be often learned by obtaining permission to view the breeding pens of any breeder of repute in your neighbourhood; just walk round, and at the same time take stock of how the breeding pens are mated, and ask why they are mated in such a manner; there are many gentlemen who breed bantams who would be only too glad in the breeding season to show any beginner their breeding pens, and thus impart a little practical knowledge to some young breeder, but there is nothing like practice in mating bantams, it is far before the theories that are written in books; but you will find it a very useful plan to combine the two.

A book on your favourite birds is often a very pleasant help in time of trouble. If you want to refer to anything, there you find it and you are satisfied.



CHAPTER V.

Incubation.

INCUBATION is the act of sitting on eggs for the purpose of hatching the young. In breeding bantams we have two forms of Incubation, namely, Artificial and Natural. Artificial Incubation has never yet attained any great measure of success in hatching bantam eggs. I have tried two different incubators, both of different makes, but in each case the bantam chickens hatched in them did not do well. On the other hand, I am a devoted believer in Incubators and Foster Mothers for rearing the large breeds of poultry, and have always been successful when using an Incubator for any of the large breeds but not for Rosecombs. If you are inclined to use artificial Incubation for Rosecombs, do so by all means, but personally I cannot recommend you to do so.

We next come to Natural Incubation, which, in my opinion, is far in advance of anything else for Rosecombs; first of all a few hints will be useful on where to sit your hen. Never let her sit amongst others, or where any vermin or any other bantam or fowl can get at her to disturb her. Large breeders, as a rule, have a sitting shed or room, and in this are numerous little houses (or pens is perhaps a better word), in each pen a box proportioned in size to fit the hen. To make a nest take the sitting box out of the pen and clean it thoroughly, then place the sod or

earth (preferably clay) and mould it inside the box into the form of a saucer, and then line it with soft dry grass or hay. Lastly, the box is put back again into the pen and is ready to sit a broody hen in after the eggs are placed in it.

I find that by using a nest constructed in this way it is much easier to impart moisture to the eggs in dry hot weather; to do this pour warm water on the soil when it is too dry, this evaporates, thus damping the eggs as required. Each hen is taken off her nest every morning and supplied with food, water, and a dust bath. You must use your own judgment with regard to how long the hen should be off the nest according to the state of the weather.

Next, I must recommend a hen or rather hens, that are most suitable for hatching Rosecombs. I do not believe in using the larger breeds if it can be avoided, but I have used two of them with marked success, viz., buff Orpingtons and silver Wyandottes, both making excellent sitters.

If you live in the country you can generally hire a broody hen for a shilling from a farmer, returning her to him when she has raised your chickens; this is the most satisfactory method to most bantam breeders, because often they don't keep a larger breed.

As a rule the larger breeds go broody much earlier than bantams, so that for early chickens it is almost necessary to use one of the larger breeds.

In bantams I have found Booteds, Pekins, and Silkies the most reliable sitters; on one occasion I had an old favourite Booted hen, she went broody, and I gave her nine black Rosecomb eggs. She hatched them all, and what is more, she reared them all and some good ones too, amongst them. But at the present time I am using cross-bred Silkie-Pekin hens as brooders, and have found nothing to equal them. Rosecombs often become very broody,

especially the whites, but never let them sit. They have not the same amount of heat for keeping the chickens warm as the feather-legged varieties; and you require eggs from them. The best way if a Rosecomb becomes broody is to remove her into a training pen until she returns to her normal condition, which usually takes a week or often longer.

A buff Orpington should cover from sixteen to twenty Rosecomb eggs, but a bantam hen will only cover from seven to twelve according to size. Always test your bantam eggs on the ninth day of incubation, to do this, hold them up to the sun in your hand or to a candle if it is dark; unfertile eggs present a clear appearance as if newly laid, but the others that are developing into chickens, *i.e.*, the fertile eggs are opaque, and this opaqueness will gradually spread towards the shell as incubation proceeds.

The amateur may find a little difficulty at the commencement in testing eggs, but as time goes on he will be able to tell at a glance if an egg is fertile or not; there is a distinct advantage in removing the unfertile eggs, especially if the weather is cold. Another very good method is to sit three or more hens at once, then if the eggs are unfertile on the ninth day you can probably dispense with the third hen and give all the eggs to the other two. The unfertile eggs that are taken away are said to be very useful for making puddings or cakes, but this is a point upon which tastes differ materially; there is the idea that they have been under a hen and sat upon. A better plan is to boil them hard and use them as the first food for the chickens. It is generally the custom if you have bought a dozen eggs to have the unfertile ones replaced, *i.e.*, if you return the unfertile eggs to the vendor and let him satisfy himself that they really were unfertile.

Eggs travel wonderfully well by rail with most gratifying results. Only last summer I sold twelve black Rosecomb eggs to a man over one hundred miles away, they went by rail, and he hatched eleven strong chickens out of them; of course, this is a very large percentage to hatch. If you sit sixty Rosecomb eggs and you have twenty chickens grow up and live it is a very fair average—that is one-third.

It is needless for me to say that it requires twenty-one days for incubation in all varieties of bantams, but if the eggs are fresh when put under the hen, they generally are chipped on the nineteenth day.

During the process of hatching the hen must not be tormented, but you must look at her as occasion requires, but not too frequently, to see how the chickens are hatching.

Take away the empty shells as they interfere with the other eggs, and often an unhatched egg may get inside an empty shell and thus prevent it hatching; always remove the chickens as they hatch; at intervals of about two hours, place them in a small basket, wrap them in a flannel and put them in the house near the fire. Then when all are hatched they are all given back again to the hen inside a coop on the grass in some shaded position. Be careful not to try to assist chickens too freely at the time of birth; if possible, natural birth is far in advance of artificial assistance.

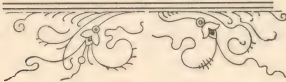
Cold north winds are very detrimental to incubation; on the other hand, moist mild weather is just what is required. There are only three months in the year that are suitable for hatching exhibition Rosecombs, so that the breeder must hatch all he requires during these three months; they are April, May, and June. Birds hatched earlier than April as a rule get too large and coarse; on the

other hand, those hatched later than June do not grow the feather that is now required in a first-class exhibition bird, so that you see April is the very best time to hatch Rose-comb cockerels, and May and June are the best months to hatch pullets.

Returning to incubation, beware of broken eggs, give the hen plenty of room in the nest, or she may break the eggs when returning to the nest; if this is the case remove the egg or eggs as the case may be, and any others that have come in contact must be washed in warm water, or some of the eggs may stick to the hen and be broken when she comes off to feed the following morning.

If there are many hens sitting it takes a considerable time to have each one off the nest every morning, but this must be done, as neglect weakens the hens and causes many other troubles which are not desirable.

Never feed sitting hens on soft food, but always on good sound corn; the best to use is sound wheat alone, and nothing else, and remember fresh water, which is most important.



CHAPTER VI.

Rearing Chickens.

REARING Rosecomb chickens is not an easy matter without you have had previous practical experience. First, when young they are very much affected by climatic changes ; secondly, Rosecomb chickens are not naturally robust, as they have not the physical energy when young that you find in the larger breeds.

Of course, the constant "in breeding" resorted to by the best Rosecomb breeders does not help to produce strong lively chickens, therefore to rear successfully great care and attention is necessary without neglect under any circumstance.

Just a word now about coops. I always make my own, and find they cost me about two shillings each one complete, that is including lime-washing and one coat of paint. All coops are much better for rearing bantams without bottoms, *i.e.*, if you have ground enough at your disposal to move the coop on to fresh ground every morning.

If you are not a carpenter, then I should recommend you to buy a coop and run complete, at the nominal price of six shillings.

Having placed your hen and her family in the coop, you must next turn your attention to food. For the first

twenty-four hours chickens require neither food nor water, but don't forget that the hen requires nourishment during this period.

The first meal should be composed of a hard boiled egg chopped up fine and mixed with a double quantity of bread crumbs or crushed biscuits. Feed the brood on this alone for the first three days at intervals of two hours. On the fourth day start them on biscuit meal. I have found nothing to equal it in rearing bantam chickens. Mix it fresh every time with hot water, and give it to the brood while it is just warm. But there is one point, and that is to mix it up every time you wish to feed, because if it is kept it goes sour after having been scalded, and sweetness and cleanliness are most important points.

Many now use dry chicken food, I have used it with marked success, but remember water is required with the dry food system.

For the first fortnight Rosecomb chickens should be fed every two hours, but be careful not to give them more food than is eaten up greedily ; don't leave stale food about in the vicinity of the coop.

As the brood gets older they do not require feeding so often, but how often is to be left to the good judgment of the feeder. As they grow you must gradually get them on to mixed chicken corn, which should be given to them as the last meal of the day, because hard corn is more sustaining, taking longer to digest, thus sustaining them during the night.

Variation in food is a great thing for chickens ; a few scraps from the house, or in fact anything, they will eat in moderation, and don't forget green food and fine grit, the last two items are just as important for chickens as they are for adult birds.

If the weather is extremely rough and a real wet day I generally move my early chickens bodily with the coop and hen under a dry shed, but all breeders, especially those in towns, have not the accommodation to do so; then in their case coops with bottoms to are useful, as they keep the brood and hen dry, thus preventing cramp and other disorders that arise from damp. Coops with floors must be cleaned out every morning, and the floors sprinkled with sand, sawdust, or anything of that nature that will help to keep the inmates dry and clean. I never let my hens out of the coops; they remain cooped up until either the chickens leave them or they begin to get fresh and lay again. When the chickens are about seven weeks old the hen will gradually leave off calling them, she will take an objection to them and they will leave her; then she must be taken away and the chickens put into a run and house apart from her.

Never let Rosecomb chickens roost before they are four months old; let them sleep on the floor of the house, but remember to keep this floor clean, and never crowd young chickens; at four months old the cockerels should be taken away from the pullets; at this age they may have a perch.

Keep the sexes separate henceforth until you are ready to mate your breeding pens, and don't allow two breeds of chickens to run together. As a rule cockerels of the same breed do not fight with each other, because they have been reared together since birth, but place two cockerels together out of two different broods and the results may be both disastrous and costly.

If the accommodation is at hand, the best thing is to put every cockerel into a separate pen, but this is rather a difficult task, as it means putting up numerous cockerel pens, which are expensive items. And again, many breeders

have not the space to erect many houses. Of course, as soon as you find any glaring faults in your cockerels it is advisable to kill these birds, thus making more room for the more promising ones. If any birds of either sex are born with single combs kill them at birth, as they are not worth rearing, and all breeders who have had much experience find that at times a Rosecomb chicken is hatched with a single comb; single comb offsprings are more prevalent in certain strains, but you hear of one or two being born here and there nearly every season.

A very critical period is just when the chickens are getting their first feathers, they look very bad sometimes. Upon several occasions I have looked at them at this stage and wondered if they will be alive the following morning. Sometimes they succumb through weakness, but on the other hand they often rally and grow up all right; but at this stage they want great care and attention. Another formidable enemy to young chickens is diarrhoea, which arises from various causes such as sour food, irregular feeding, general debility, &c.

General symptoms are loss of appetite, debility, dirty feather, wings carried low, and generally the anus will be stopped up by an accumulation of excrement round the outside of it. To remove this, catch the bird and carefully bathe the accumulation until it becomes soft, then remove it and wash the part perfectly clean, and also watch it the following days, and don't allow a second accumulation or the result may be fatal.

It is in most cases an effort of nature to remove some irritant from the intestines, therefore do not check it if it is not very bad; but if very bad, of course the chicken must be treated.

Treatment in a prolonged case is rarely beneficial in the end, as these little chickens are so difficult to treat; much better, if possible, to have a natural cure, which in most cases comes about suddenly when entrusted to time, but try to find the cause of the trouble, then means may be taken to prevent a return of this horrid disease, which often is not so serious but very troublesome.

When the chickens begin to get their second feathers they must have shade from the rays of the sun. Shade is just as important for black Rosecombs as it is for whites if you want to show good colored birds, which are always the admiration of every exhibitor and judge.

The sun turns the feathers of the whites yellow, *i.e.*, a yellow tinge of creamy, and on the other hand a black that is exposed to wind, rain, or sun does not get that lovely green sheen and gloss that is so admired in the show pen.

When blacks are feathering a little linseed given daily with their first meal is often beneficial to increase the brilliancy and length of feather, before being given, it must be boiled.

But shade in the summer and autumn is most important for chickens that are intended for exhibition at the winter shows. In the next chapter I shall describe how houses and runs can be constructed to guard against the active rays of the sun.



CHAPTER VII.

Houses and Runs.**Moulting.**

NATURALLY a breeder of Rosecombs requires many small houses and runs, and the smaller and more portable these are the better. Many breeders have their chickens reared from home if space is limited. Under these circumstances so many runs are not required, and the cost for rearing each chicken is generally five shillings up to six months old.

I make all my own houses and runs, and they are a great success, in fact every breeder or poultry-man ought to be a rough carpenter, as it is both useful and economical to be able to build your own houses and runs.

I shall describe a portable house and run that is suitable for being moved about on an orchard at intervals of about three days, thus giving the occupants a change of ground.

The house is two feet wide, three feet long, and three feet high, with a pair of handles fixed on either side for moving it about. A perch is put across inside, and be careful not to place it over the nest box; the perch must be loose so that it can be taken out once a week, thoroughly washed and rubbed over with paraffin. Any small box will do for a nest box, with a little hay and a pot egg in it; pot eggs that are sold for pigeons are the correct size for bantam nests.

Fine peat moss, ashes, or sawdust should be put upon the floor to absorb any moisture that there is, and thus keep the house sweet and dry.

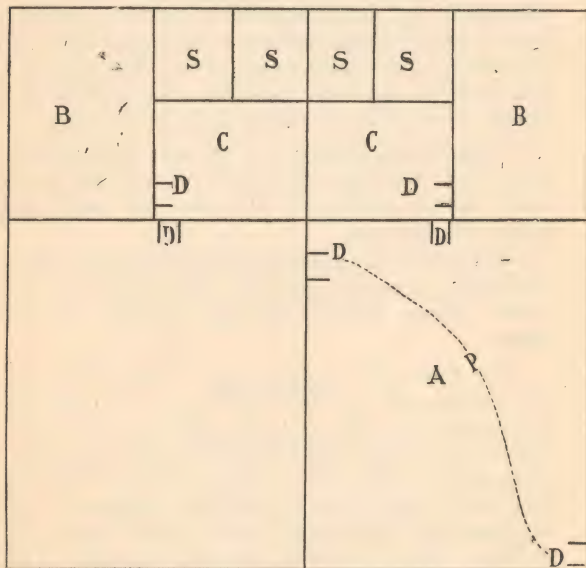
The house should be cleaned out weekly, a house this size will hold a trio very comfortably, or a Rosecomb cock and three hens would not be too many, but it is a bad thing to overcrowd at any time. Don't forget good ventilation and light, the latter can be supplied by putting a small square of glass in one end of the house.

I will now describe a portable run suitable for the house, this run must be six feet long, and either four or six feet wide, it must be boarded all round, *i.e.*, the sides ends must be boarded two feet high from the ground and the top covered with canvas or wire netting; for Rosecombs canvas is preferable.

A pair of handles are fixed at either end of it, thus making it very portable, this run and house is my own construction, and there is nothing to equal it for Rosecombs if you have the room to be constantly moving it about on to fresh ground in an orchard or field; if it is in the latter, use canvas instead of wire-netting to protect the birds from sun and bad weather. Canvas on the top of a run is most useful, especially to prevent the whites from getting tanned, it also keeps the blacks in better form. Of course, it is not so necessary if your portable house and run is situated in an orchard, because you can keep moving it about under the fruit trees, which form a good shade from the sun in the summer.

This form of house and pen is very useful for a cockerel pen, keeping the birds in first-class condition. Again, I often use this kind of house and run for a hen and brood of chickens. It is vermin proof, and the run being boarded prevents any fighting.

People who live in towns where space is more limited have to resort to fixed runs, and in this case it is advisable to have them covered in as much as possible. In a small garden in a town it is best to have the centre grass, then



DOUBLE BANTAM AVIARY.

- A.A.** Grass Runs.
- B.B.** Roosting Houses.
- C.C.** Covered Runs for bad weather.
- D.** Doors.
- S.** Four sitting boxes for hens.
- P.** Path.

to build the house round the garden with small covered runs ; then the occupants of each house can be let out for an hour or two daily on to the centre grass plot where they will get fresh air, a nice run and a little green food, and in summer this grass plot or lawn will be useful to rear the chickens on, but never overcrowd under these conditions. Much better in a case like this to send your eggs out in the country to a reliable person to rear the chickens for you, then you can have them home again at about six months old, when they should be ready for exhibition.

When feeding Rosecombs in the runs it is advisable to put the food in a saucer or small tin, or they may get crop bound through picking up dry grass and other foreign bodies with their food.

The above is the ground plan of a fixed Bantam Aviary that I built ; it was my own idea. Since then I have seen several Bantam Aviaries, but not one like it in every respect.

The grass runs are covered with wire-netting on the sides and top, and all round the sides, two feet high, there is corrugated iron, thus preventing fighting and making it vermin proof. The sides of the houses are composed of corrugated iron, but the roofs are covered with red tiles, thus giving them a more picturesque appearance. The corrugated iron is let into the ground a foot deep all round the houses, thus making them practically rat proof. A good sized window is found in both houses, that is left wide open on warm days and closed when required. The sitting boxes are most useful, as you can let the broody hens off the nests into the covered runs while the stock birds are out on the grass runs.

The floors of the covered runs and houses are covered with peat moss ; this is just thrown down on to the natural

earthen floor. I may say this Bantam Aviary is situated on a hill; had it been built in a valley it is probable than an artificial floor would have been required to guard against damp. I give no dimensions, as the plan is suitable for any size according to the room at the disposal of the builder. Remember an Aviary of this size and build is much more expensive than the portable houses and runs, but in a situation suitable for it, it will be found very useful. Let it face south as it will be warmer and more healthy; the covered runs must be boarded up two feet from the ground to keep the cold winds out and also prevent fighting. Of course, there are many other admirable varieties of houses, runs, and aviaries, but these two varieties are the most suitable for Rosecombs. Many bantam houses and runs you can buy ready made; they are advertised weekly in the poultry papers, and many of them are very good, but it has been my object in this chapter to point out how the breeder can construct his own premises, thus saving extra expense.

Moulting.

This is a most critical period with Rosecomb bantams, especially the whites. Never show a bird when moulting, and never attempt to wash a white when moulting, or the result will probably be fatal. The quicker and the earlier a bird moults the better, as it is then ready for the winter shows, and they also stand the cold better under these circumstances.

The growing feathers are a great strain on the system of Rosecombs, especially the cockerels, I have known them die through weakness. Boiled linseed is very useful in moderation during this period; also a little flowers of sulphur mixed with the soft food in the morning.

If a Rosecomb running out does not moult as quickly as desired; put this bird up in a warm place or training pen and feed it on soft food morning and evening, and you will find a great alteration in a week's time.

It is an annual occurrence; and a very troublesome time it is to the exhibitor; the first moult, which takes place in August or September, is the easiest time for young birds, the older the bird the more protracted is the moult.

In Rosecombs the feather gets much shorter in every succeeding moult, for instance, a cockerel with a lovely tail may the next moult only produce a tail about three-quarters the length of the original one; also each succeeding moult, as a rule, the stock birds increase in size and lose their lovely shape.

Birds when moulting are very susceptible to colds and roup, which must be guarded against.



CHAPTER VIII.

**Preparing for Exhibition
and Showing.**

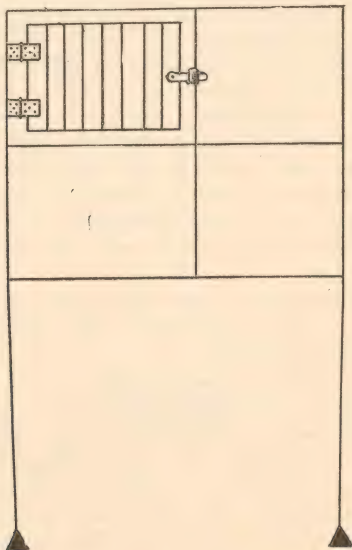
IT is no use exhibiting a Rosecomb at the present time without it is very fit, that is has had a careful training for several weeks previous to the exhibition. It is just like a fellow going in for an examination without any previous special training, the result is he comes out at the bottom or thereabouts. So it is with a Rosecomb bantam if shown without any previous special training; it goes to the show, is wild in the pen, and the judge will not look at it, and the result is it comes home again without a prize, which is often a great disappointment to the exhibitor, especially if he is a novice and does not understand why he has lost.

Showing bantams is like showing any other class of animal, *i.e.*, it pays if you show the best, but it never pays to show moderate exhibits.

Rosecombs are no good for utility, so that it should be your one thought from the day the chickens are hatched, whether they will be any good for show. With a breed like this you cannot start too early to prepare your young stock for show, but as I said before, it is better to divide young birds into two lots, one for show and the other for stock, as it is advisable if you can afford to do so never to show the birds you breed from, eggs will be more fertile and the chickens stronger.

When is a Rosecomb at his best?

To this question I say, without doubt, from six to twelve months old ; they are not much good for show after eighteen months old, as they get coarse, the lobes go, and they depreciate rapidly in value. The time when most attention is required is between five and six months old for birds that are intended to be shown. At this age they will be just getting their second feather, and also the comb and lobes will be growing rapidly ; this is the age they require shelter from rain, wind, and sun.



FOUR PORTABLE TRAINING PENS

(Front View).

You require a penning shed to put your birds in that are intended for exhibition, and the temperature of this shed should be about 60 deg. if possible, day and night.

Just a few words about training pens which are a very necessary article to every exhibitor. Of course, the wire ones may be bought, but it is better to make you own. I will try to demonstrate how to do so.

The above pens stand on four legs, each leg being three feet high, that is, the pens are raised three feet from the ground; the pens and legs are all wood with the exception of the doors, these have wooden frames with wire bars inserted, as shown in the above illustration.

Each pen is a foot and a half square—that is, in height, length, or breadth it measures eighteen inches.

The advantage of these wooden pens over wire are—first, the doors open all across the front so that there is no difficulty in cleaning out; with having wood all round with the exception of the front it makes them free from draught.

A joiner will make you four pens like these for about 10s., but if you are a good rough carpenter there is no difficulty in making them, the two largest items being the time and the materials. I do not advise more than four to be made in one block, as they are not so portable. If more are required have another block of four made, they are always useful, and if short of room in the summer they will come in as sitting boxes, always use sawdust on the floor of the training pens, it can be bought from any timber yard at threepence or sixpence per sack according to the quality and cleanliness of it.

When a bird is in a training pen it requires daily attention first to get it perfectly tame. To do this handle it often, stroke it down the back with a stick, let it eat out of your hand, and eat out of your mouth—that is, take food

from your lips. This latter trick is very useful to Rosecombs, because it gets them into the habit of bringing their head forward immediately one looks into the pen, and head points go a long way both in blacks and whites; therefore, the comb and lobes should never be neglected, as they require almost daily attention before a Rosecomb is shown.

The back of the comb should be worked between the finger and thumb in order to lengthen the leader and also to give it an upward tendency. It is advisable to put a little vaseline on the fingers before manipulating the comb in this manner. The lobes when growing should be bathed with warm milk and water and also worked out with the finger and thumb. Violet powder or powdered zinc are often used to dress the lobes with, if they are not as white as you would like them to be. I have also found glycerine very useful for softening them and giving them a kid like texture, it is advisable to keep your penning shed or training pens rather dark, as this has a tendency to whiten the lobes.

Be careful not to let the combs get too large; artificial heat is very beneficial to the active growth of combs. Daily grooming improves the feathers of birds, more especially blacks, as it increases the sheen. For this purpose an old silk handkerchief is very useful to give them a rub down with every morning.

It is advisable to give the birds in the training pens a tonic sometimes, and the best is quinine and cod liver oil capsules. The quinine is a tonic and the oil is warming and improves the feather, on the other hand, if you put sulphate of iron in the drinking water it is uncertain whether the bird will drink it if he takes a dislike to it.

The final preparation in a black is to wash the comb, lobes, and face with warm water, dry them thoroughly, then put a little vaseline on the comb, face, and wattles, there is

nothing to equal it if used in moderation, but never put vaseline on white lobes.

Next wash the legs and feet, getting all dirt and dust from under the scales; dry thoroughly, put a little vaseline on them, and polish them with a dry towel or cloth. Give the bird a final rub down with a silk pocket handkerchief, and he is then ready to be placed in a hamper and sent away, carriage paid, to a show.

Just before starting birds should always have a good feed of hard corn to sustain them on the journey.

Two or three days before the show it is necessary to wash a white, and the first attempt is never successful; there is no difficulty in getting soap at the present day as there are so many different kinds, but some are superior to others for this kind of work.

Next get two tubs fixed on a sink, in one warm water and in the other tepid. Don't get the warm water too warm, have it so that you can bear your hand in it without discomfort. Take the bird in the left hand and wash it with the right hand, using a small piece of sponge with soap on it; remember to rub with the feathers not against them or the result will be disastrous. Don't be frightened of wetting the bird, if it faints give it a dash of cold water over its head, and if that is not successful give a few drops of brandy.

When the bird has been washed perfectly clean in the first tub, it must next be rinsed thoroughly in the second tub to get all the soap out of the feathers.

Next get all the wet out of the bird you can by using a dry towel, and finally put it in a half-lined basket with the open side to the fire; be careful not to put it too near the fire. In very hot summer weather, whites may be put in a similar basket in the sun, but in this case you must mind they don't get too hot; but the fire is the preferable of the

two. When thoroughly dry the bird must be kept on straw or sawdust for two days, and finally sent off to the show. Birds that often appear white in the pen show a yellow tinge much to the horror of the owner after they have been washed.

If it was not for this washing whites would be as popular as blacks, but so many people have an objection to washing bantams. It certainly requires a great deal of time and patience. Put clean straw or hay in your exhibition hampers every time they are used ; also remember to dry them before the fire previous to the birds being put into them.

Classes are provided for blacks at nearly every show of any importance now, and they generally fill well, but for whites you only get separate classes at three or four of the classical shows.

When your birds return from a show exhausted and hungry give them soft food for the first meal, as it digests quicker. Still keep the birds up in the training pens for a day or two even if they are not wanted again for show, in this way they can be hardened off by degrees.

Remember to pay just the same attention to those birds that have not won anything, they all require care and attention upon coming home again after the show.

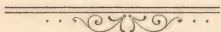


Mr. R. Fletcher Hearnshaw

FOX HILL,

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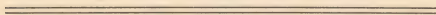
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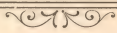


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